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FM AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 2786  
RUCNASE/ASEAN MEMBER COLLECTIVE

UNCLAS KUALA LUMPUR 000421

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR PRM/ANE AND EAP/MTS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREF](#) [PHUM](#) [SMIG](#) [SCUL](#) [BM](#) [MY](#)

SUBJECT: FUNDING PROPOSAL FOR PRM JULIA TAFT FUND FOR REFUGEES

REF: STATE 14280

¶1. Summary. Post submits for funding consideration the proposal in para 3 from Harvest Centre Bhd. The grant would fund teacher training to improve educational opportunities for all refugee children, but in particular the ethnic Rohingya Muslims, ethnic Burmese Muslims, and Chin communities. This proposal has the potential for a broad impact across the disparate refugee nationalities and ethnic groups. Post submitted the full grant proposal to PRM/ANE via email on May 29. End Summary.

¶2. Recipient: Harvest Centre Bhd was originally founded in 1998 as a missions group under the New Covenant Community Church in Malaysia. In 2003 it officially registered as an NGO under its current name and has maintained a code of conduct consistent with the UN IASC's six principles as per REFTEL. Harvest Centre provides education and literacy opportunities for refugees and asylum seekers in Malaysia. Since 2004 it has been a UNHCR implementing partner, running schools for children as well as adult literacy programs. It currently runs a school serving 230 mostly Rohingya children with classes five days a week.

¶3. Proposal: Harvest Centre has identified a critical gap between the expanding population of refugee children and the number of qualified teachers, seeking \$20,000 to run an initial 17-week training project targeting up to 60 current and future teachers from across the various refugee communities. The cost will cover the hiring of educational experts, supplies and space rental. Current teachers are mostly volunteers from within the communities themselves, many without prior training or experience. Furthermore, these teachers lack the basic understanding of local curriculum requirements that are crucial to providing future opportunities to the refugee children to find employment in Malaysia. Harvest Centre hopes that better training for refugee teachers will provide their students not just a basic educational framework like reading, writing, and arithmetic, but intangible problem-solving skills necessary to navigate and successfully compete throughout their lives.

¶4. Justification: The Government of Malaysia (GOM) does not distinguish between refugees and illegal immigrants, making it impossible for refugee children to enroll in local public schools. Many refugees, especially those in the Rohingya community, have limited opportunities for resettlement, so it is imperative that the children have sufficient education to better their own lives. This proposal, developed in close coordination with UNHCR, will improve the education environment across the major refugee communities by providing more qualified teachers, the first key step in expanding the children's opportunities.

¶5. Grant Authority: Post's Public Affairs officers have the authority and capacity to award a grant to the proposed recipient prior to the end of the fiscal year.

KEITH